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INDIGENOUS ISSUES

INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE:
ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
IN PREPARATION FOR THE DECADE

Report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
and the Coordinator of the Decade

Introduction

1. The World Conference on Human Rights recommended in its Declaration and Programme of Action that the General Assembly should proclaim an international decade of the world's indigenous people, beginning in 1994, with action-oriented programmes to be decided upon in partnership with indigenous people. It also recommended that a permanent forum for indigenous people should be established within the United Nations system.
2. By resolution 48/163, the General Assembly proclaimed the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, commencing on 10 December 1994; by resolution 49/214, the Assembly adopted the short-term programme of activities for the Decade for 1995; and by resolution 50/157, it adopted the draft programme of activities for the Decade, emphasizing the role of international cooperation in the solution of the problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health.
3. One of the objectives of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People was the adoption of the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous people, which is currently under discussion in a working group of the Commission on Human Rights. Another objective is the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations system in order to create a permanent arena where indigenous people could discuss matters of interest to them with Governments and contribute to the promotion of peace and prosperity, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.
4. A further objective targeted by the Decade is recognition of the importance of education in the search for a solution to the problems facing indigenous peoples and of the need to promote and protect the human rights, and historical rights, of these peoples.
5. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights lays particular emphasis on the importance of international cooperation in the search for solutions to the problems faced by indigenous peoples. His priorities include promoting and ensuring an ongoing dialogue between Governments and indigenous peoples in order to provide them with technical assistance and strengthen their organizations so that they can find and implement solutions to their own problems.
6. The High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights, within the new institutional infrastructure, has resolved to strengthen and renew efforts to achieve the objectives of the programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. To that end, the Management Board has decided to include a proposal for an indigenous affairs group, which would be responsible for carrying out activities relating to the rights of indigenous peoples.
7. In resolution 1996/39, the Commission on Human Rights requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Coordinator of the Decade to report to it on the activities undertaken for the Decade at its fifty-third session under the agenda item entitled "Indigenous issues". This report, which was prepared at the Commission's request and in response to General Assembly

resolution 50/157, paragraphs 8, 9, 11, 13, 14 and 15, describes the activities undertaken by various United Nations bodies in relation to the draft programme of short-term activities for the Decade from January 1995 to December 1996. 1/

I. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN 1995

8. By resolution 49/214, the General Assembly adopted the short-term programme of activities for the Decade for 1995, contained in annex II to the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/444). The majority of these activities have been completed; others, such as the fellowship programme for indigenous peoples and the expert meeting on land rights and claims of indigenous peoples, scheduled to take place in Whitehorse, Canada, were postponed until 1996. The activities carried out include the following.

9. Establishment of the Voluntary Fund for the Decade. When the Fund for the Decade was first established, contributions were received from four countries. The fund currently includes contributions from eight countries (Australia, Canada, Greece, Japan, Kuwait, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland), four non-governmental or private organizations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Relaxation Company, Intuition Music Inc. and VGS Verlagsgesellschaft) and one private individual, (E. Stamatopoulou).

10. Technical Meeting on the Decade. This Meeting, the purpose of which was the preparation of a broad programme of action for the Decade (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/1995/5), was held on 20 and 21 June 1995, in Geneva, prior to the thirteenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. At this Meeting, a constructive dialogue was established between the representatives of indigenous peoples and Governments with a view to preparing a common programme for the Decade.

11. Other activities. The eighth meeting of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations was held from 24 to 28 April 1995. Financial assistance was provided to 52 indigenous participants so that they could attend the thirteenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which was held from 24 to 28 July 1995. It was decided to include a sub-item on health and indigenous peoples in the agenda for the Working Group's fourteenth session. The second report of the Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements between States and indigenous populations (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1995/27) was considered. The Special Rapporteur, who had prepared the report on the protection of the heritage of indigenous people, informed the Working Group that she had concluded her revision of the principles and guidelines contained in her report on that topic (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1995/26). She analysed the theme of the Decade and expressed her support for the programme of activities formulated by the Technical Meeting. The Working Group established in accordance with Commission on Human

1/ At its fifty-second session, the Commission, by decision 1996/102, established an agenda item entitled "Indigenous issues".

Rights resolution 1995/32 for the purpose of formulating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples met for the first time from 20 November to 1 December 1995.

12. International Day of Indigenous People. In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 49/214, the International Day of Indigenous People was observed for the first time on 9 August 1995. Commemorative events were held at United Nations Headquarters and the United Nations Office at Geneva with the participation of indigenous peoples, Governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and focused attention on the aspects of human rights most relevant to indigenous peoples.

13. Submission of the final report of the Secretary-General on the programme of action for the Decade. The Secretary-General submitted his final report on a comprehensive programme of action for the Decade (A/50/511) to the General Assembly. The Assembly adopted resolution 50/157, which includes in its annex the programme of activities of the Decade. Some of the activities indicated in the draft programme of short-term activities for 1995 were not carried out for various reasons, one of which was insufficient financial resources.

14. Inter-agency meeting on indigenous peoples. This meeting was held on 19 July 1995 in Geneva for the purpose of providing information on the activities carried out by the various organizations in the United Nations system. The United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) reported on its establishment of a Focal Point for Indigenous Peoples within its culture sector. The First Assembly of the Indigenous Initiative for Peace was held in cooperation with indigenous peoples' organizations from 13 to 17 February 1995. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that, although none of its current projects was specifically devoted to indigenous peoples, many of its projects at the country level included work with indigenous populations. The Secretariat's Department of Public Information (DPI) had prepared a poster on indigenous women and a pamphlet entitled "Seeds of a New Partnership". The International Labour Organization (ILO) reported on the specific projects that were being carried out in Guatemala, India and the Philippines and on the development of working materials for indigenous peoples. The representative of the World Bank reported on the Bank's activities in connection with indigenous peoples and, in particular, on training programmes for indigenous peoples in Latin America. The United Nations Volunteers reported on their two activities: a community development programme and a programme for ethnic minorities. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported on its resolution WHA 48.24 on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, drawing attention to its objective "Health for all by the year 2000" and to the importance of including measures at the regional level and inviting member States to inform it of the existence of focal points for indigenous health issues. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) reported on the aspects of its work which focused on the most vulnerable human groups, including indigenous peoples. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reported on three regional meetings devoted to providing information on indigenous peoples in the Amazon region, Asia and the Pacific.

15. Official observance of the Decade at international conferences. The Decade has been observed at the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995) and the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 4-15 September 1995).

II. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN 1996

16. In its resolution 50/157, the General Assembly adopted the programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. In the outline of its objectives, great importance is attached to the role of international cooperation in the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, health, culture and education.

17. It establishes education as being of vital importance in the search for a solution to the problems facing indigenous peoples, stresses the need to promote and protect the human rights of indigenous peoples, and recommends that a permanent forum for indigenous peoples should be set up within the United Nations system and that the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples should be adopted.

18. Some of the activities proposed in the draft programme of short-term activities for the Decade and scheduled for 1996 were included in the programme of activities for the Decade.

19. Activities to be undertaken by the major actors. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 48/163, 49/214 and 50/157 concerning the Decade, recommends that the United Nations system, Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other interested parties should contribute to the activities and objectives of the Decade together with the indigenous peoples.

20. International Day of the World's Indigenous People. Ceremonies in observance of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People were held, for the second time, on 9 August 1996 at United Nations Headquarters in New York and the United Nations Office at Geneva with the participation of representatives of indigenous peoples, Governments and NGOs. Relevant aspects of human rights were examined, attention being focused on indigenous peoples' right to health. Participants in the ceremony in New York included representatives of the American Indian Community House (United States of America) and the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (Ecuador), and a representative of the Mosiro Masai people (Kenya). Participants in Geneva included representatives of the Aymara People (Bolivia), the Maori people (New Zealand) and the Indian Law Resource Center (United States of America). In his message, the Secretary-General pointed out that the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People carries out activities in such vital areas as human rights, protection of the environment and access to health and education, and called for the full participation of indigenous peoples. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in a message delivered in New York on the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, spoke of the importance of giving those people greater access to decision-making processes at both national and international levels, and stressed the need for the adoption of legal instruments to safeguard

indigenous peoples' rights with regard to their traditional territories, and for the implementation of those instruments as the only way of ensuring the survival of those people.

21. Official observance of the Decade at international conferences. The Decade was observed at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996).

Activities of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Coordinator of the Decade/Centre for Human Rights

22. Fellowship programme. In 1997, the Office of the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights will implement a pilot programme of fellowships for indigenous peoples. The programme will take place at the United Nations Office in Geneva over a six-month period (June-November) and will include training and practical work on human rights and the United Nations system. The pilot programme will offer four fellowships for this first year. It will be carried out in conjunction with indigenous peoples' organizations and NGOs. As of December 1996, 80 fellowship applications had been received from 33 countries in various parts of the world.

23. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In February 1996, a UNESCO delegation met in Geneva with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other officials from the Centre for Human Rights to consider activities which could be carried out jointly within the framework of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. Priority was given to the cross-border human rights training programme for the indigenous peoples of Peru and Ecuador, to be carried out with the cooperation of the Voluntary Fund for the Decade.

24. Expert Seminar on Practical Experiences regarding Indigenous Land Rights and Claims. In response to resolution 49/214, the seminar took place in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, in March 1996 at the invitation of the Government of Canada and with the participation of independent, government and indigenous peoples' experts from various parts of the world. Proposals for the protection and development of the lands and territories of indigenous peoples were put forward, and a series of conclusions and recommendations (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/1996/6) were submitted to Governments, indigenous peoples and their organizations, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

25. Workshop for Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific on the United Nations draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. The workshop took place in Suva, Fiji, from 2 to 6 September 1996. It was organized by the Government of Fiji and supported by UNDP, the European Union, the American Friends Service Committee and the Centre for Human Rights. On the recommendation of the Advisory Group to the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade, the Coordinator decided to support the workshop. Participants included 40 representatives of indigenous organizations from Australia, French Polynesia, Hawaii, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Western Samoa, as well as representatives of the Government of Fiji, a representative of UNDP, and observers from the Australian and New Zealand Embassies. The indigenous

peoples of the South Pacific islands were given information on the draft Declaration and other initiatives such as the International Decade and the proposal to establish a permanent forum. The workshop aroused interest among the people of the region in the work of the Office of the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights, and it is hoped that there will be increased participation in human rights meetings by the indigenous peoples of this region.

Operational activities of the United Nations system

26. In resolution 50/157, the General Assembly invited the organizations in the United Nations system to give increased priority and resources to improving the conditions of indigenous people, including the preparation of specific programmes to launch special projects in collaboration with indigenous people and to designate focal points for coordination with the Centre for Human Rights of activities related to the Decade. The Centre for Human Rights called a meeting of United Nations agencies on 26 July 1996 in order to consult them regarding their activities in connection with indigenous peoples.

27. UNESCO is carrying out a project in Guatemala, called Maya World, which deals with education, science and human rights and stresses cultural integrity and biological diversity. As part of the activities being carried out in the context of the World Decade for Cultural Development, UNESCO is working to enhance recognition of indigenous literature and promote traditional languages.

28. WHO has established a focal point on indigenous peoples to deal with matters related to indigenous programmes. On the occasion of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA 49.26 and urged member States to designate focal points for issues relating to health and indigenous peoples.

29. ILO deals with indigenous matters under Conventions Nos. 107 and 169 concerning human rights and provides technical assistance aimed at the implementation and ratification of the two conventions. It worked with the Ministry of Nationalities of the Russian Federation to organize a meeting in September 1995 for the purpose of securing international technical assistance for the indigenous peoples of that country and discussing ratification of Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries. ILO is carrying out an interregional programme to support self-reliance on the part of indigenous and tribal communities through cooperatives and other self-help organizations. This programme has been operating since 1993 and has 17 pilot projects in the Philippines, India and Central America.

30. UNDP is considering activities for indigenous peoples under two headings: the development of a new information policy to promote widespread public dissemination of documents, and the establishment of a focal point for indigenous peoples within the Programme.

31. The World Bank, through its Department for Asia and Latin America, is implementing projects involving indigenous peoples. There is a trend towards taking into account the land rights and intellectual property rights of these peoples.

32. The United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Commitments of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala (MINUGUA) is determining issues of identity, discrimination, culture and the right to land; these issues are supported by ILO Convention No. 169. MINUGUA is also involved in the setting-up of technical cooperation programmes outlined in the peace agreements.

33. The purpose of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, an intergovernmental organization, is to promote intellectual property rights. It recognizes that there is a close relationship between intellectual property rights and plant conservation, and the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands and to survival.

34. The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity stresses the importance of the Convention's framework in relation to respect for indigenous innovations and practices and for the way of life of traditional local communities, an issue which it is trying to address.

35. Other activities. The ninth meeting of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations was held in Geneva from 22 to 26 April 1996. Financial assistance made it possible for 22 indigenous participants to attend the fourteenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and for 4 such participants to attend the second session of the working group established in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/32. The fourteenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations was held from 29 July to 2 August 1996. It considered the evolution of standards concerning the rights of indigenous peoples and the sub-item on "the concept of indigenous peoples". These matters will be further discussed at the fifteenth session, which will also include the issues of land and the environment. The Working Group recommended that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities should undertake a study on the recognition of indigenous land rights and appoint a special rapporteur on the subject. The Working Group established in conformity with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/32 met for the second time from 21 October to 1 November 1996 with the broad-based participation of representatives of Governments, NGOs and the 106 accredited indigenous organizations.

III. EXISTING MECHANISMS, PROCEDURES AND PROGRAMMES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS CONCERNING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

36. In accordance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 50/157, the Secretary-General considered existing mechanisms, procedures and programmes within the United Nations concerning indigenous peoples in a report (A/51/493) which deals with the following matters: participation of indigenous people in the legislative bodies of the United Nations system, meetings on indigenous issues, policy guidelines and research activities related to indigenous people, programmes and projects, funds available for

indigenous people, future activities in connection with indigenous people, views of indigenous people, and consideration of a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations. The conclusions include the statement that there is growing interest and concern for indigenous issues on the part of organizations and departments of the United Nations system; however, the activities of some organizations have more direct relevance to indigenous people than others.

37. The Working Group on Indigenous Populations, established in 1982, has served as an entry-point into the United Nations system for indigenous people. Despite the absence of mechanisms to ensure the regular exchange of information among the interested parties (Governments, United Nations system and indigenous organizations), a number of programmes and projects are now being planned and implemented by United Nations agencies.

38. There is a need for mechanisms within the United Nations which give the nominated representatives of indigenous organizations and peoples an opportunity to provide expert advice and take part in decision-making. One mechanism which involves indigenous people in the decision-making process is the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations, in which indigenous people act in a personal capacity.

39. The World Bank has elaborated operational guidelines on indigenous peoples.

40. The declarations and programmes of action of recent high-level conferences and meetings indicate directions that could be taken by countries.

IV. SECOND WORKSHOP ON THE POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT FORUM FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

41. The Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 1996/41 on the question of a permanent forum in the United Nations system, requested the Secretary-General to provide the Commission at its fifty-third session with a report on the activities undertaken and information received in pursuance of that resolution.

42. The Working Group on Indigenous Populations considered, at its fourteenth session, that the permanent forum should be established at the highest possible level within the United Nations system and that it should not be a replacement for the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The Working Group expressed its appreciation to the Government of Chile for its offer to host the second workshop on the possible establishment of the proposed forum; the workshop is to be held at the beginning of 1997.

43. The Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, at its forty-eighth session, recommended that the Centre for Human Rights should organize a second workshop on a permanent forum for indigenous peoples in early 1997. It also recommended that that forum should be established in the early part of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and that its mandate should include questions relating to all fields included in the programme of activities of the Decade. It welcomed

the offer by the Government of Chile to host the second workshop. This important meeting is scheduled to take place in May or June 1997.

V. PARTICIPATION OF INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE PLANNING
AND EXECUTION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DECADE

44. The Coordinator of the Decade has transmitted the General Assembly resolutions and other documents relating to the Decade to Governments and indigenous, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with a note referring to specific points made in the resolutions, including, inter alia, the importance of establishing national and local committees and of strengthening the Voluntary Fund for the Decade. Governments and indigenous and non-governmental organizations have in turn always participated fully in the technical discussions leading to the preparation of the programme of activities for the Decade, in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and in other important meetings on indigenous peoples.

45. In response to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/32, which the High Commissioner transmitted to Governments and indigenous and non-governmental organizations, 106 indigenous organizations from all over the world were duly accredited for participation in the working group of the Commission, which is preparing a draft declaration on indigenous rights. The active participation of the world's indigenous peoples is included in the activities of the Decade and of the United Nations.

VI. PROMOTION OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE DECADE

46. As mandated by the General Assembly in its resolutions 49/214 and 50/157, the High Commissioner and the Coordinator of the Decade have promoted the objectives of the Decade at various international meetings and conferences, in particular at the Global Indigenous and Youth Cultural Olympics/Summit for Peace and Sustainable Development, held in Manila from 25 February to 3 March 1996, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994.

47. Promotion of the objectives of the Decade has been reflected in the activities of the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations, the fellowship programme, the Expert Seminar on Practical Experience regarding Indigenous Land Rights and Claims, and the Workshop for Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific on the United Nations draft Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples.

48. Some of the operational activities of the United Nations system are devoted to the achievement of the objectives of the Decade. Those objectives are also being promoted in the activities of regional organizations, some Member States, indigenous peoples' organizations, NGOs and other interested parties, including teaching institutions such as the University for Peace, which was established by the United Nations and has its headquarters in Costa Rica.

VII. IMPORTANCE OF THE SUPPORT OF THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER/CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ACTIVITIES RELATING TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

49. As from 30 September 1996, and in accordance with the restructuring of the Office of the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights, indigenous affairs, including the objectives of the Decade, have been divided among the Centre's three subdivisions: the Research and Right to Development Branch, the Support Services Branch, and the Activities and Programmes Branch. The Management Board subsequently decided to include a proposal for an indigenous affairs group, which would be responsible for carrying out activities relating to the rights of indigenous peoples in order to ensure coherent development and progress towards the implementation of the policies of the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights with regard to such peoples.

VIII. FUNDING SOURCES FOR THE DECADE

50. The Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People was established pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 48/163 and 49/214 for the purpose of funding programmes and projects during the Decade and strengthening international cooperation with a view to finding solutions to the problems faced by indigenous peoples. The Fund is administered by the Secretary-General in accordance with the financial rules and regulations of the United Nations.

51. The Advisory Group of the Voluntary Fund for the Decade, established in conformity with the programme of activities of the Decade (para. 15), met for the first time from 29 April to 1 May 1996 and decided to draw up guidelines and a questionnaire (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/1996/4, para. 8, and Annexes I and II), to submit requests for financial support to the Fund for the Decade and to consider, at future meetings, the analysis and recommendation to the Coordinator of the Decade of projects put forward by and on behalf of indigenous peoples. At its first meeting, the Advisory Group recommended that the Centre for Human Rights should give priority to the following proposals, depending on the availability of funds from the Voluntary Fund for the Decade: to organize a second international workshop on the permanent forum for indigenous peoples recommended by General Assembly resolution 50/157; to develop a project for short-term scholarships to provide indigenous leaders with training and practical experience in human rights and the United Nations system, in conjunction with indigenous peoples' organizations and NGOs in Geneva; to sponsor, in conjunction with UNESCO, the human rights training programme for indigenous representatives and official delegates of the Governments of Peru and Ecuador; and to provide technical support for an information workshop on the draft declaration of the rights of the indigenous people of the Pacific and Asia Region, proposed by the Government of Fiji. Finally, it recommended that the necessary assistance should be provided to the indigenous project of the Central and East Africa Regional Information Office, in conformity with the established guidelines.

52. Despite emphasis on the need for funding of programmes and projects during the Decade, insufficient funds have been received. From 1994 to 1 December 1996, a total of US\$ 274,872 was donated to the Fund.

53. The report of the Secretary-General to the fifty-first session of the General Assembly (A/51/499) calls on Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, financial institutions and private bodies to be more generous in their contributions to the Fund for the Decade.

54. While a fund-raising agency could undertake the collection of donations, seeking new funding sources for the Decade, it would cost money to hire such an agency and, in view of the current state of the Fund for the Decade's resources, that is a problem which remains to be resolved.

IX. FINAL COMMENTS

55. The objectives proposed in the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People offer a comprehensive range of activities that are indispensable for resolving the many problems facing indigenous people. Despite the progress made in the past two years, much remains to be done. All of those involved in the Decade are urged to increase their efforts to achieve its objectives.

56. International cooperation in solving the problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, health development and education requires the establishment of mechanisms for coordination between Governments, regional, indigenous, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties.

57. The existing resources of the Voluntary Fund are insufficient to meet the needs of the Decade. Governments, governmental and non-governmental organizations, financial institutions and other private bodies should therefore be reminded to donate to the Fund.

58. It is suggested that all high-level international conferences should devote more time to the discussion of matters relating to the objectives of the Decade and that forums for the participation of indigenous peoples should be created.

59. Work must continue on the proposal for a second workshop to consider the possibility of establishing a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations system, in order to create an arena where they can raise and discuss matters of interest to them.

60. Mechanisms should continue to be developed within the United Nations to give the nominated representatives of indigenous organizations and peoples an opportunity to provide expert advice and take part in decision-making in the search for solutions to the problems faced by their peoples.

